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ABSTRACT

Methods and resource materials are suggested for teaching elementary level students about the concept of interdependence in terms of the Bicentennial. The rationale lies with a belief in human interrelatedness and the universality of human rights for which the signers of the Declaration of Independence struggled. Students are encouraged to explore American history and find events and individuals that worked to unite Americans and foster peace among ethnic groups, races, religions, and the government and American Indians. For example, Benjamin Franklin is cited as a significant contributor to cooperation between the colonies. To celebrate the festival of the Bicentennial, activities are suggested which involve students in making collections of poetry and essays about their reactions to life today and in making colonial costumes. Awareness of new horizons can be deepened by discussing basic human needs, writing poetry relating the past to the future, and studying critical global issues such as energy, population, and mass transportation. A bibliography of 14 books and journals provides resource materials for all activities described in the kit. (AV)

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INTERDEPENDENCE — SPIRIT OF 1976: A SPECIAL BICENTENNIAL EDITION OF "TEACHING ABOUT INTERDEPENDENCE IN A PEACEFUL WORLD"

Donald Morris

"All people live under the same sky but
not all people see the same horizon."

—John W. Warner
Administrator, ARBA

When the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration (ARBA) was established by the U.S. Congress to coordinate and aid in planning our country's 200th birthday celebration, three basic themes reflecting our past, present, and future were adopted: "Heritage '76—let us remember . . . ," "Festival USA—let us celebrate . . . ," and "Horizons '76—let us shape tomorrow . . . " The practical wisdom evidenced by ARBA in approaching a respectful and responsible celebration of our Bicentennial from *all three* of these vantage points facilitates and encourages broad participation on the part of nonprofit, nongovernmental voluntary organizations throughout our nation. It is in this spirit that the United States Committee for UNICEF, with the assistance of a grant from the Longview Foundation, is proud to present this elementary teacher's kit, "Interdependence—Spirit of 1976: A Special Bicentennial Edition of Teaching About Interdependence in a Peaceful World." Although this kit draws from the richness of *heritage*, its primary emphasis is on a celebration that will help us shape a better *horizon* for every child—during our Bicentennial and beyond.

From Independence to Interdependence: Bicentennial Heritage or Heresy?

What is the rationale for presenting this teacher's kit on interdependence as Bicentennial educational material? If experience has taught us anything in our last 200 years, we must be aware of the fact that what is "obvious" from the viewpoint of one observer may well be less certain from that of a second observer, and even irrelevant to a third. From the viewpoint expressed by many of the Founding Fathers of our nation, the American Revolution was a *world ideal.* Henry Steele Commager examines the writings of several of the signers of the Declaration of Independence and other Revolutionary leaders and states that they believed they were speaking for all humankind and not just for Americans and their fledgling nation. Commanger further states:

> The men who fought the Revolution and created the new American nation were children of the Enlightenment. They shared the Enlightenment conviction that mankind was one, that men were everywhere alike—subject to the same laws, responding to the same impulses, animated by the same passions, and entitled to the same rights.[1]

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It is in this sense of human interrelatedness and the conscious recognition on the part of our Founding Fathers that the human rights for which they struggled were universal human rights to be secured for all, that the concept of interdependence clearly begins to emerge. We suggest that the teacher read Commager's article, "The Revolution as a World Ideal," in the December 13, 1975, *Saturday Review* and note the words and expressions that support this concept.

For the young reader Commager has written *The Great Declaration* (Bobbs-Merrill, 1958). With personal descriptions and quotations from many of the signers of the Declaration, Commager points out two important things for the young reader to remember about that document at the end of his book.

> Now the first thing we note about these principles, or doctrines, is that they seem to us, as they seemed to Jefferson, the common sense of the matter . . . as valid today as yesterday, and as valid tomorrow as today. The second thing we note is that these principles do, in fact, refer to "all men," not just to Americans. They are America's birthright, but they're also man's birthright. They have spread from America throughout the whole civilized world.
>
> The Declaration of Independence belongs to world history, and is the possession of all mankind.[2]

With a more fully indexed reference for young readers on words and phrases that shaped America's history, Johanna Johnston's *The Challenge and the Answer* (Dodd, Mead and Company, 1964) offers further rationale for the concept of interdependence as a key idea in our country's history. For example, she cites a small colonial publication which printed on its title page, as early as 1692, the words that were later to become part of the Great Seal of these United States—"E Pluribus Unum"—"Out of many, one."[3] The following show other examples of how the concept of interdependence grew along with our new nation:

> Christopher Gadsden, First Intercolonial Congress, 1765:
> We should stand upon the broad common ground of natural rights . . . There ought to be no New England man, no New Yorker, known on the continent, but all of us Americans.[4]
>
> Benjamin Franklin, 1776:
> We must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we will all hang separately.[5]
>
> Tecumseh, Chief of the Shawnees, 1810:
> Sell a country? Why not sell the air, the clouds and the great sea, as well as the earth? Did not the Great Spirit make them all for the use of his children?[6]
>
> Abraham Lincoln, 1858:
> A house divided against itself cannot stand.[7]
>
> Abraham Lincoln, 1868:
> In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free . . .[8]
>
> Supreme Court Decision, May 17, 1954:
> We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal . . .[9]

Such words show awareness of interdependence from the founding of our nation, and they are truly an important part of our heritage. Thanks to Chief Tecumseh and the *Native* American part of our heritage, we have evidence of some awareness of our *environmental interdependence*. However, strong feelings of divisiveness and sectionalism were also evident, contributing to a civil war nearly 100 years after the American Revolution, and racial segregation continued for nearly another century following that. While our Founding Fathers' concept of freedom sprang from a "universal" ideal, the viewpoint of a considerable number of members of the Continental Congress represented southern plantation interests in slavery, supported by those from the North who profited from ships engaged in the slave trade. Thus, even Jefferson's clause against slavery had to be dropped from his original draft of the Declaration of Independence as the concept of freedom for slaves was closer to *heresy* than to *heritage* for some in that day. And just as our country's concept of freedom has matured, so has our sense of interdependence grown from colonies depending on each other to nations working together in an increasingly interdependent world.

As our national consciousness moves from "Heritage" to "Horizon," so must our concept of community expand to encompass all humanity. Thus we believe, with the National Education Association, that a most fitting theme for an educational celebration of our Bicentennial is:

> **A Declaration of Interdependence: Education for a Global Community**
>
> We hold these truths to be self-evident:
>
> that 200 years after declaring our independence, the American people are entering a new era.
>
> that today we must acknowledge the interdependence of all peoples.
>
> that education can be a vehicle through which peace and the principles of the American Revolution—life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—may become the guidelines for human relationships on our planet.
>
> that educators around the world are in a unique position to help bring about a harmoniously interdependent global community based on the principles of peace and justice.[10]

200 Years of American History in an Increasingly Interdependent World.

Despite the fact that the colonists did recognize some degree of interdependence, both between the colonies themselves and between the colonies and England, their move for independence was fueled partly

by a desire to claim their fair share of interdependent trade with other nations, rather than having all commerce channeled through the mother country first. Thus we might say that the American Revolution moved our country from a primarily *dependent* status to a primarily *independent* status in relation to England. But once the new nation had emerged, its impact on the world and the world's reciprocal impact set it on an eventual course toward a variety of ever-growing world *interdependencies.*

For example, in 1776 the colonies together had a population of about 3 million. (Although figures of even this size are difficult for children to conceptualize, we could suggest that our population two hundred years ago was less than one third of the population of the New York City metropolitan area today.) This population was spread mostly along the coast from Maine to Georgia, as well as smaller numbers into the Appalachians and beyond. With such a sparsely populated land rich in resources and with a people motivated to increase their productivity and self-reliance after the Revolution, it is not surprising that the concept of *independence* became deeply ingrained as part of the American heritage.

However, the economies of our new nation and those of many other nations were linked together in many ways not generally recognized at the time. Although politically the colonies had for some years been English colonies, the population included significant numbers of Dutch, French, Germans, Irish, Jews, Scots, and Welsh. In addition to these ethnic groups, there were several thousand free Blacks as well as a large population of slaves. The young country was more *dependent* upon an "imported" resource than it cared to recognize. The human resource of labor and the variety of multicultural intelligence and creativity which accompanied the continuous stream of immigrants from other parts of the world were in no small measure a factor in that "independence." (For an interesting curriculum article on "Cultural Diversity: Strength of the Nation," see the January 1976 Bicentennial issue of *Educational Leadership.*)

By 1790, when the first federal census was taken, immigration, along with a substantial surplus of births over deaths, had added nearly another million. (This population—approaching 4 million—did not include 80 million Native Americans.) Nevertheless, the increase would have been much greater had it not been for very high infant mortality rates and death during childhood, which were quite common because of such diseases as measles and diphtheria. Epidemics of smallpox, typhoid, and other diseases often brought from afar not only served to keep the population down, but pointed out that there is no such thing as independence where the dimension of health is considered! The enclosed unit on "Global Interdependence and World Health" helps children with this concept.

The best known personality in the Colonies and in the first years of our new nation was undoubtedly Benjamin Franklin. In fact, some historians state that because he was so well known on both sides of the Atlantic and was respected internationally as a scientist, inventor, author, musician, and philanthropist, as well as a politican and statesman, he was in fact "America's first citizen of the world."[11]

While no one can question Franklin's love for his country nor his enthusiastic participation as a patriot during our American Revolution, it is equally apparent that he understood and operated on the concept of interdependence. He knew that people had to depend on each other and to cooperate if any worthwhile human activity were to succeed. This sense of interdependence on the part of Franklin and his ability to project it in practical usage, bringing individual interests together, may well have been his greatest gift to his country. Richard Morris exemplifies this idea in his description of Franklin.

> Franklin's brain teemed with ideas for improving his city, his country and himself. His great talent for persuading people to work hard, and work together, made most of his projects come true. He led in giving Philadelphia its first paved streets, first fire company and first regular police. He helped to make his adopted city the home of the first American lending library and the first learned society, the first public hospital and the first fire insurance company.[12]

For more about Franklin's leadership in bringing about other kinds of cooperation between the colonies as their postmaster general, see the enclosed unit, "Global Interdependence and Worldwide Mail." This unit includes a description of Franklin's work in setting up the post road system in the colonies, a direct overseas mail packet line between England and New York, and a direct mail service between Montreal and New York, and it tells how Franklin envisioned a future postal system on which people all over the world could depend.

Additional Ideas for Relating Interdependence to the American Bicentennial—Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

"Heritage '76--let us remember"

Look for and challenge students to find examples of Americans and events in our 200-year history that worked to "bring us together" and that worked for justice and peace within our country between different

ethnic groups, different races and religions, and between our government and the American Indians. Then look for men and women who worked for justice and peace between the United States and its world neighbors. This approach can help add balance to our proud history without detracting from the Americans who fought bravely and died for their country.

Although children may have heard more about our war against England, they may not have realized how many nations befriended our new country and the respect shown for our ideals of freedom and justice. Look for examples of peace and cooperation between the United States and its world neighbors over the last 200 years of our history.

Try to get a copy of *The Way It Was—1876* by Suzanne Hilton (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1975), and especially read chapter nine describing the "Centennial Exhibition and Other Special Days." This chapter describes the celebrations in Philadelphia as well as those in small towns over the U.S. and the addition of our Centennial State, Colorado. But from the viewpoint of global interdependence, the description of the participation of the many foreign countries in the Centennial Exhibition is a must. The following quotation may give some idea of the way countries worked together for the benefit of all humankind during our Centennial:

> A medical exhibit from Belgium took away people's fear of the smallpox vaccine. Joseph Lister [England] spoke to a group of medical men about his "germ theory," and within a few years people would finally understand what caused diseases and would begin to work on ways to prevent them. All the countries taking part in the Exhibition compared notes on many of the problems they shared. One country had a superior way of teaching the blind to read. Another had a better way to make false teeth so they would fit. Women compared needlework samples, foods, and styles of clothing.[13]

What more fitting way to celebrate our Bicentennial than to review the many things that have been accomplished by cooperation and sharing between nations of the world during the second century of our history? In those dynamic years since our Centennial, the rapid advance in transportation and communication brought peoples of all nations closer together and made them much more aware of the fact that they were living in an increasingly interdependent world.

"Festival USA—let us celebrate"

Expand the concept of our national celebration to include information about the many nations who are joining with us in some way to celebrate our Bicentennial. So far 69 foreign countries, many of which played important roles in the development of our country, are on the roster to celebrate our 200th birthday. (If you are using these materials after July 4, 1976, take advantage of the currency of recent international contributions to our Bicentennial Celebration, because this kit is designed as an ongoing teaching kit and is to be used as we move on into our third century.) For a complete listing of the 69 nations and how they are contributing, write to: ARBA, 2401 E Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20276, and ask for a copy of the January 1976 *Bicentennial Times* as well as subsequent issues that might also list international participation.

As one example, the people of the Netherlands sent one million Dutch bulbs as a Bicentennial birthday gift to the people of the United States. Schools all over our country have received these beautiful bulbs, and their schools and communities are being brightened by this thoughtful gift from a nation which encouraged our new country and lent us money to help us in the difficult days of our birth and infancy.

Challenge children to read and to listen carefully to all that is going on around them as we start our nation's third century. Try to share the excitement and the idea of unusual opportunity to be a young person in school at this time in our history. Encourage them to capture their thoughts and reactions to what they are seeing, hearing, and experiencing. Suggest that the class make a Bicentennial collection of their poems, essays, or short stories. Children in Fairfield, Conn., made such a book of poetry and had it published in paperback. (For more information on this particular book, write to: Peggy Abramo, Children's Library, Fairfield Public Library, Post Road, Fairfield, CT 06430.)

Some children may want to make some simple costumes to show the dress and styles of the Colonists and early Americans. These may be made for dolls or life size, and they may vary from a simple item or two to a complete costume. For further suggestions and reference sources on festival costumes and clothing of the past, see the enclosed unit on "Costumes for the Bicentennial." Although this unit is planned for upper grade use, the ideas suggested and references listed can be useful for teachers of lower grades as well.

"Horizons 1976—let us shape tomorrow"

Ask children to think about the word *horizon*. What does it mean? When we travel on from where we are now, we move toward a horizon. Though we continue toward our horizon and learn and experience many valuable things on our way, we never arrive at a horizon. Help children think of their tomorrows as horizons and plan how they and their generation in all parts of this world can move forward working together peacefully for the benefit of all humankind.

As a start children might want to think of the basic needs that are common to all human beings and expand their thinking to include basic human rights. Discuss the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child (enclosed in this kit) and ask what kinds of concerns we must address ourselves to if there is to be a future for every child as we move toward our horizons. (A complete elementary teacher's kit "Teaching About the Rights of the Child," and a 40-slide color set with teacher's guide and commentary are available at low cost from the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. See enclosed catalog.)

What do children think of when they are asked to write a Bicentennial poem that relates our past to the future? You may want to find out what your children think the future may hold for them. Too often predictions of disaster loom large in their minds. Temper the challenge with the idea that their future depends on recognizing the interdependence of all humankind and deciding to act together—caring for and sharing with each other and respecting the environment as well as each other.

One most interesting answer to what children are thinking can be found in *A Child's History of America* (Little, Brown and Company, 1975). Created by Edward McGrath especially for the Bicentennial, this unusual history book was completely written and illustrated by children from all parts of the United States.

The following brief excerpts certainly evidence a sense of global interdependence in these young "historians":

Happy Birthday America!

If I was going to give America a birthday present for being 200 years old, I would go all around the world and stop wars and give food and clothing to needy children . . . We would have a big block party at Washington, D.C. or here at home on the beach. I would invite my friends and my teachers, parents, grandma, President Ford and secretary, Congress, and the ambassadors and Kings and Queens from the whole world plus any children that they have . . . We would play games from all round the world, Parcheesi from India and Monopoly from America . . .[14]

Love and Hate

I think America's biggest problem is not getting along together with each other. Hate is one of the worst things in the world . . . I would not force anyone to love and respect others but I would constantly tell them that survival depends on it.[15]

The Future

What I wish the future will be is that we all pitch in and clean it up. I hope the stealing and crime stops. If I'm gonna have a kid I don't want to bring him up in our world the way it is now. I hope there will be nicer people, and lots of flowers, plants, forests, green mountains and warm sun. I hope people like each other. I hope the sky doesn't have dirty clouds. It should have fluffy, white clouds. I want to live in a clean place. I hope everybody tries to help to make the world a better place to live.[16]

Also see the Appendix for examples of poems written by the children of Fairfield, Conn. In these poems children show concern for the future, but they also show hope. They call out for learning to love people and for a willingness to share and give of oneself.

Again we must commend the National Education Association Bicentennial Committee for their Horizons approach which offers ideas for studying critical issues facing our global community.[17] The issues identified by NEA are among the following. Study these issues, discuss them with your class, and try to think of other critical issues we need to study is we are to shape a better tomorrow.

1) Studying alternative energy sources—recognizing our environmental interdependence

2) Understanding political decision-making—identifying value priorities as the basis for decisions

3) Exploring mass transportation—moving people more humanely and ecologically

4) Diagnosing food and population problems—meeting the challenge of global hunger and poverty

5) Learning about and respecting other cultures—organizing exchanges and other forms of shared education

6) Thinking metric—learning to share a common system of measurement

7) Seeking better communication—understanding each others' feelings and ideas

8) Learning to work together peacefully on all common human problems—experiencing a sense of real global community.

As a combination approach to studying the "Heritage" and the "Horizons" dimensions, challenge children to use their creativity and imaginations to set up scenes and role playing situations on "the way it was way-back-when." Then ask children to find out how many of the changes between then and now came about by peoples of many cultures and nations cooperating and sharing to make a better life for all humankind. From that point project changes into the future, setting up comparable scenes and role playing situations on "the way it will be way-out-then." The children might also investigate and examine values then and now and see if *all* change was for the better, adjusting their future projections to allow for those important values.

Finally after studying the basic ideas and human values expressed in our *Declaration of Independence* and what it meant to young people in 1776, challenge the class to cooperatively write a *Declaration of Interdependence* which will have meaning for their lives as they move towards their horizons in this increasingly interdependent world. Students may want to read an excellent little book by Mary Kay Phelan, *Four Days in Philadelphia* (Thomas Y. Crowell, 1967), to see just how our Declaration was debated and finally took shape. Then study the enclosed "Declaration of INTERdependence" provided by the World Affairs Council of Philadelphia. The class may want to send their own Declaration of Interdependence to their local newspaper or share it with other schools in the area.

* * * * * * *

However you plan to use this special Bicentennial Global Education Kit, we sincerely trust that the material in it and the ideas and suggestions for extended activities help to enrich the children in your school.

We trust that they will be more aware of their own rich heritage *and* of the challenge and opportunity open to them to work together to make this world a better place for all in the next 200 years. We earnestly request that you share with us some of the outcomes generated by the materials and ideas in this kit. Please write to: School Services, U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 331 East 38th Street, New York, NY 10016.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Henry Steele Commager, "The Revolution as a World Ideal," *Saturday Review* Vol. 3, No. 6, December 13, 1975. p. 13.

[2] Henry Steel Commager, *The Great Declaration* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1958) pp. 106-107.

[3] Johanna Johnston, *The Challenge and the Answer* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1964), p. 22.

[4] *Ibid.*, p. 40.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 42.

[6] Johnston, p. 58.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 84.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 97.

[9] Johnston, p. 152.

[10] *NEA Bicentennial Ideabook* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1975), p. 8.

[11] Richard B. Morris and editors of Life, *The New World* Vol. I (New York: Time Incorporated, 1963), p. 130.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 132.

[13] Suzanne Hilton, *The Way It Was—1876* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), p. 196.

[14] Edward J. McGrath Jr., Director, *A Child's History of America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975), p. 16.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 89.

[17] *NEA Bicentennial Ideabook*, pp. 21-23.

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Books

Adler, Mortimer J. And William Gorman. *The American Testament.* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975).
A direct and concentrated inquiry into the truths of the American Testament—the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution of the United States, and the Gettysburg Address—to make explicit all that is implicit in each text and to submit for reconsideration the fundamental propositions that form the coherent political doctrine.

Bi-Centennial Book of Poetry written by the children of Fairfield, Conn. (Fairfield, Conn: Fairfield Public Library, 1976).
A collection of Bicentennial poetry by children from Fairfield, Conn. Shows examples of future and global concerns as well as past and domestic views of our Bicentennial.

Cavanah, Frances. *Freedom Encyclopedia.* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1968).
A child's encyclopedia of people, places, events and documents from the Magna Carta to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Helps the young person see how the present builds on the past and paves the way for the future.

A Child's History of America, written by America's children, directed by Edward J. McGrath, Jr. (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1975). Through their own words and pictures, children tell us how they see America's History and what it means to be an American as we enter our third century. Interestingly their sense of community includes global dimensions.

Commager, Henry Steele. *The Great Declaration.* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1958).
Interwoven narrative of facts, correspondence and history telling of the story of the Declaration of Independence from the faint stirrings in the minds of men to the passing of the Declaration by each state.

Hilton, Suzanne. *The Way It Was—1876.* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975).
An illustrative tour of America's past through old prints, photographs, games, books and other examples of everyday living in the year of our country's first Centennial.

Johnston, Johanna. *The Challenge and the Answer: Words That Shaped America's History.* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1964).
A collection of famous quotations in American history restored to the context of the time when they were spoken. The aim of the book is to show how some of the famous words always sprang from a living situation in response to a real, and sometimes desperate, challenge.

Morris, Richard B. and editors of Life. *Life History of the United States.* (New York: Time Incorporated, 1963).
A six volume series presenting a historical development of the United States.
The New World: Prehistory to 1774, Vol. I.
The Making of a Nation: 1775-1789, Vol. II.

Ross, George E. *Know Your Declaration of Independence and the 50 Signers.* (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1969).
A collection of short biographies of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Tower, Samuel A. *A Stamp Collector's History of the United States.* (New York: Julian Messner, 1975).
Emphasizing stamp collecting is fun, this children's book starts with Bicentennial Era stamps and proceeds with enlarged stamps and text to summarize 200 years of U.S. history, ending with a short section on the U.S. in the world, the United Nations and our heritage for the future.

Other Publications

"America's Impact on the World 1776-1976," *Saturday Review* Vol. 3, No. 6 (December 13, 75).
A special Bicentennial double year-end issue focusing on the American experience and how it has helped shape the world in the past 200 years.

"Bicentennial Reflections on Curriculum." *Educational Leadership* Vol. 33, No. 4. Washington, D.C.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, January 1976.
This issue is devoted to curriculum development and materials with an impact on our country's first 200 years and reflections into the future.

"Citizenship Education Beyond the Bicentennial." DEA News Supplement No. 8. Washington, DC: American Political Science Association, Winter 1976.
This excellent eight page news supplement features "Citizenship Education Beyond the Bicentennial" and outlines four basic criteria for such education at the elementary level. For free copy, write to the Division of Educational Affairs, American Political Science Association, 1527 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

NEA Bicentennial Ideabook. Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1975.
A compilation of programs, ideas and resources for the Bicentennial celebration, featuring the theme, "Education for Global Community."

APPENDIX

Freedom For All

I hear the voice of Lincoln
Crying in the night.
His is a voice of freedom
For dignity and Human Right.

Many voices follow
Some loud, some very strong
All trying to bring about justice
Trying to undo wrong!

Much progress has been accomplished
From the freeing of the slaves
To the laws that Freed all women
Gave them rights to be more than maids.

But the struggle isn't over
There's much more left to be done,
In this struggle for human freedom
Let our voices all be one!

—Wendy Determan

What is a Person?

A person is good
A person is bad
A person is glad, A person is mad
A person is black, A person is white
No matter the color
they're both just right
A person is woman, A person is man
No matter the sex they do what
they can to survive
Get the equality idea, into your head
And learn to love people before
they are dead
A person is young, A person is old
they talk to each other
and hear what is told
Maybe they'll learn from each other
A person is yellow, A person is red
Learn to love people
Before they are dead

—Charles Anflick

America Know

200 years have passed
us by
Within a twinkling
of an eye
The future hold[s]
tremendous things
On earth, in the sky
and under the seas
It's hard for one to
visualize
Riding space ships up
in the skies.

—Juli Gorski

America: Past, Present, Future

Yesterday this land was new
With bright green trees
And skys of blue
Everything was peaceful then,
And very much at ease.

Today the world is getting on
And it looks like things have taken this cue
Because everything is almost gone
Things that the earth produces are also few.
People don't care
As they did before
But they really should
Care a lot more.

Tomorrow the world will be old
And the trees will have died
Because of people, who have been so bold.
When it's too late, and when it's all gone,
all will have cried

So we must stand up now
Without any haste
And protect things that are needed
for each and every race.
Because in order for it to be like
in the past,
We must begin now, and act really fast!

—Patricia Neth

Selections from the *Bi-Centennial Book of Poetry* by the children of Fairfield, Conn. (Fairfield, Conn.: Fairfield Public Library, 1976).